

THE CENTER FOR CIVIC  
EDUCATION**HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 1, 2003*

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, the Center for Civic Education of Los Angeles, California, is a leader in promoting civic education in the United States, and promoting democracy throughout the world. They regularly contribute to civic understanding in the United States through a presence in each Congressional District.

Their excellence in teaching citizens to appreciate and participate in their government took an international approach seven years ago through annual "Leaders Seminars" in the Center's Civitas Exchange Program. I am proud that the 2003 Civitas Exchange Program Leaders Seminar was co-hosted by the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) of our friend and neighbor, Mexico.

IFE is an autonomous agency of the Mexican federal government responsible for organizing federal elections and promoting civic education. From September 25–30, 2003 the Center held the seventh annual Leaders Seminar of its Civitas Exchange Program in Mexico City, Mexico, providing an international forum on civic responsibility in maintaining democratic principals in government.

IFE and the Center for Civic Education have forged a partnership to adapt Project Citizen, a civic education program for middle school students, for use throughout the Mexican school system. At the Leaders Seminar, Mexican students who have studied democratic practices and principles (through the work of IFE and the Center) analyzed national and community problems for more than 150 delegates from some 34 countries and 30 states of the United States.

A remarkable number of entities cooperate to make the Civitas Exchange Program a leading cooperative project of civic education organizations in the United States and emerging and established democracies throughout the world. The Civitas Exchange Program is administered by the Center for Civic Education and funded by the U.S. Department of Education under the Education for Democracy Act approved by the United States Congress. International assistance comes from the U.S. Department of State and the Agency for International Development (AID).

The Center for Civic Education centers their mission on Thomas Jefferson's philosophy on the safekeeping of democracy: "I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of society but the people themselves."

For all the work the Center for Civic Education does—domestically and internationally—to better prepare our children to participate in the democratic life of our nation, I ask my colleagues to join me in commending this organization for their work to make this country—and the world in which we live—a better place for the generations that will follow us.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE  
HAPPY COUPLES**HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 1, 2003*

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the first day in which residents of Cook County, Illinois will have the opportunity to register their domestic partnerships with the Bureau of Vital Records. This is an important first step towards full equality for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people and I am proud to stand in solidarity with them on this historic day.

This day does not just represent a political victory for the LGBT community or a day in which, finally, same sex partners will be able to obtain proof of their relationships in an effort to get health and other benefits. It is also a day when friends and family will come together to celebrate two people's love and commitment to each other. It is a day on which a couple who committed themselves to one another years ago can finally make it official.

I would like to recognize and congratulate a few of my friends and constituents who will be registering: Gary Cozette and Joe Lada, Brandon Neese and David Wick, Mary Morten and Willa Taylor, Jackie Kaplan and Ann Perkins, Kelly Cassidy and Alex Silets, Gail Morse and Lauren Verdich, Phil Burgess and Jim Nutter, Mark Isaug and Micah Krohn, and Michael Bauer and Roger Simon.

It is my hope, however, that our progress will not stop here. It is my hope that one day all couples in all states and counties will have the opportunity to register their partnerships and receive all the legal benefits currently enjoyed by heterosexual married couples. No one should ever have to spend time convincing a doctor to be allowed to see her partner in her hospital bed. No one should ever again have to go without health insurance if his partner's employer provides it. No one should be separated from a life partner because immigration laws don't recognize the relationship.

So, congratulations to all the couples celebrating today. This is a major victory in the fight for equality and justice.

THE BEATIFICATION OF MOTHER  
TERESA**HON. HENRY J. HYDE**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 1, 2003*

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I believe that if God finds a person more useless than me, He will do even greater things through her because this work is His—Mother Teresa.

Pope John Paul II will beatify Mother Teresa of Calcutta on October 19, 2003. The ceremony will take place in Rome after the shortest beatification process in modern history, a testament to the remarkable life and spirit of Mother Teresa.

Born in Macedonia, Mother Teresa became a Roman Catholic nun in 1928, which brought her to India where she taught school while living in a convent in Calcutta. Surrounded by

human suffering of staggering proportions, Mother Teresa was moved to extend her commitment beyond the classroom and convent and began her lifelong ministrations to the destitute, sick and dying. She selflessly dedicated her life to alleviating the pain and suffering of the poorest of the poor. Embracing the destitute in the spirit of love and sacrifice, she came to be known as the "Saint of the Gutters." Her good works inspired people throughout the world and from all walks of life to join her in caring for the poor and suffering, and inspired many young women to follow her in establishing a religious order, The Missionaries of Charity. Prior to Mother Teresa's death in 1997, The Missionaries of Charity had grown remarkably to 517 missions in more than 100 countries with 5,000 sisters in her order. The Missionaries of Charity have also produced the Fruit of Contemplative Brothers and Fathers: the lay missionaries and coworkers of Mother Teresa.

Mother Teresa saw the spirit of God in each human being, which led to her tireless efforts around the world, as her fame grew, on behalf of all human life. "Among the works that flowed from Mother Teresa's heart, one of the most important is the adoption movement" (the words of Pope John Paul II). She not only administered to the dying, she saved thousands of young lives. Later in her life, the spirit of human life moved her to minister to those afflicted with HIV/AIDS.

Though Roman Catholic, Mother Teresa's work embraced all persons regardless of religion, race or nationality. In turn, her work achieved international acceptance and appreciation, transcending religious and political boundaries. At her death, in recognition of her life's work serving its poor, its sick, and its dying, predominantly Hindu India accorded her state honors. Mother Teresa was an honorary American citizen, a recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979 and the Medal of Freedom in 1985. But above all, Mother Teresa was a loving, pious servant to the poor throughout the world.

Mother Teresa's life's work of relieving the suffering of the poor is carried on today by The Missionaries of Charity and by her example of a worldly life illuminated by divine grace. Her greatest contribution, however, may be her spiritual enrichment of us all.

SPACE SHUTTLE INDEPENDENT  
OVERSIGHT ACT OF 2003**HON. RALPH M. HALL**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, October 1, 2003*

Mr. HALL. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing the "Space Shuttle Independent Oversight Act of 2003", legislation that will help the Space Shuttle fly more safely once it resumes its operations.

As the Congress reviews the implications of the Columbia Shuttle accident for NASA's Space Shuttle program, we acknowledge the excellent report of the Columbia Accident Investigation Board (CAIB), chaired by Admiral Hal Gehman. Released six weeks ago, the CAIB report clearly laid out what NASA needs to do before the Space Shuttle can be safely returned to flight, probably within the next year. Equally importantly, the report contains